POLITICS

Google founder, former Disney exec to get subpoenas in JPMorgan Epstein lawsuit

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KEY POINTS

Google founder Sergey Brin, former Disney executive Michael Ovitz and two other billionaires are set to be served with subpoenas in a lawsuit against JPMorgan Chase by the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands related to sex trafficking by Jeffrey Epstein.

In addition to Brin and Ovitz, subpoenas are being sent to Hyatt Hotels executive chairman Thomas Pritzker and real estate investor Mort Zuckerman, CNBC has confirmed.

Epstein, a former friend of Donald Trump, Bill Clinton and Britain's Prince Andrew, was arrested on federal child sex trafficking charges in July 2019. He killed himself a month later in a Manhattan jail.

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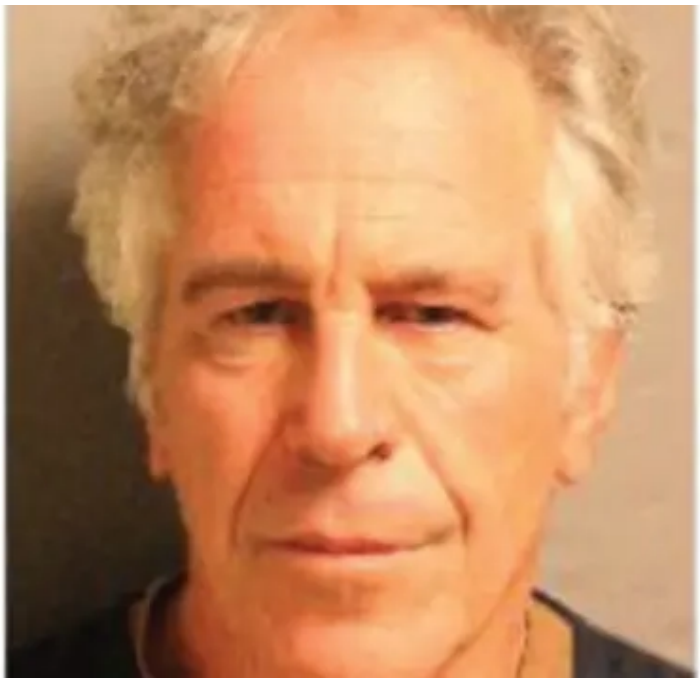

A mugshot of Jeffrey Epstein released by the U.S. Justice Department.

Source: U.S. Justice Department

Google founder Sergey Brin, former Disney executive Michael Ovitz, Hyatt Hotels executive chairman Thomas Pritzker and a fourth billionaire, real estate investor Mort Zuckerman, will be subpoenaed in a lawsuit against JPMorgan Chase by the government of the U.S. Virgin Islands related to sex trafficking by Jeffrey Epstein.

The subpoenas were first reported Friday by The Wall Street Journal. A source familiar with the matter confirmed them to CNBC.

The subpoenas demand communications and documents related to the bank and Epstein, The Journal noted.

News of the subpoenas comes three days after it was reported that JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon will answer questions under oath in the lawsuit, which alleges that the bank ignored warning signs about Epstein for years and continued retaining him as a

Kelly Sullivan | Getty Images Entertainment | Getty Images

Last week, the Virgin Islands in a press release noted that it "alleges JPMorgan Chase could have prevented harm and trauma faced by the survivors of Jeffrey Epstein's heinous abuse."

"But instead the bank chose to look the other way on these legal matters while continuing to use their banking relationship to grow their business with new clients introduced by Epstein," the release said.

On March 20, Judge Jed Rakoff ruled the suit against the bank, as well as a similar one by women who say Epstein trafficked them, can proceed toward trial.

The plaintiffs claim that JPMorgan knowingly benefited from participating in Epstein's trafficking scheme, which transported women to his residence in the Virgin Islands so that he could sexually abuse them.

Jamie Dimon, CEO, JP Morgan Chase, during Jim Cramer interview, Feb. 23, 2023.
CNBC

JPMorgan has denied allegations in the suits which are pending in U.S. District Court in Manhattan.

The bank earlier this month sued former JPMorgan investment banking chief Jes Staley, claiming he is responsible for the suits related to Epstein.

The bank seeks to claw back more than $80 million that it paid Staley. He quit as CEO of Barclays in 2021 after a probe by United Kingdom financial regulators over his ties with Epstein.

A lawyer for the Virgin Islands earlier this month said in court that Dimon knew in 2008 that Epstein was a sex trafficker. That was the year that Epstein first was hit with sex crime charges in state court in Florida.

VIDEO 00:58

NBC archive footage shows Trump partying with Jeffrey Epstein in 1992

“If Staley is a rogue employee, why isn’t Jamie Dimon?” the attorney, Mimi Liu said at the hearing,

“Staley knew, Dimon knew, JPMorgan Chase knew” about Epstein’s criminal conduct, Liu said.

A JPMorgan lawyer said at the time that the bank disputed those claims, “in particular the point about Jamie Dimon having any specific knowledge.” A bank spokeswoman has said, “Jamie Dimon has no recollection of reviewing the Epstein accounts.”

JPMorgan only ended its customer relationship with Epstein in 2013.

Epstein, a former friend of Donald Trump, Bill Clinton and Britain’s Prince Andrew, was arrested on federal child sex trafficking charges in July 2019. He killed himself a month later in a Manhattan jail cell after being denied bail.